

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
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SUBJECT: ROK-JAPAN STRAINS CONTINUE

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Tokyo reportedly intends to postpone the annual ministerial conference between Japan and South Korea until Seoul eases its harsh stand on several key issues. According to press reports, Tokyo wants to see how Seoul handles the case of Kim Tae-chong, the South Korean opposition leader abducted from Japan last summer, and the trial of two Japanese youths for alleged subversive activities. The youths were sentenced to 20 years imprisonment by a South Korean military court today.

The Japanese government reportedly is considering downgrading the ministerial conference if and when it is held, to a meeting between foreign ministers only. Six ministers on each side normally participate. Last year

the South Koreans came away from the talks with much less aid than they expected, largely because of Tokyo's pique over the Kim kidnapping.